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BOSTON ARTISTS' STUDIOS.

No. 1.

BY FRANK T. ROBINSON.

OF all things that pass current now-a-days, the gloss of pretence seems to answer the demands of fashion, brought about, doubtless, by the cant of art and the imitative powers of the mechanical producers. While veneers, cloth flowers, stained cottons and paper, iron cast reproductions, metallized plaster, etc., are used largely and are healthful steps in the cultivation of the decorative arts, still the realization of the beautiful must be toward the very best and truest objects that can be obtained—the originals.

MR. THOMAS ALLEN

Occupies one of the Pelham Studios on Boylston street. It is located on the fifth floor, and has an unobstructed light from the North. The entrance is at the side of the elevator, and a huge knocker of wrought and chiseled iron, as seen further on in the article, confronts the eye. It was made in the fifteenth century, as were the lock, key, and key guard, and once its reverberations announced the coming of friendly guests to the inhabitants of a German Castle in the Bavarian Tyrol.

This trusty metal herald swings on a natural socket, without pins or rivets, and is good for many a century yet.

Upon entering the studio one notices that the door is completely hidden by a heavy Oriental looking portière.

The general tone of this room is warm and luxurious, but in spite of a wealth of color and of detail, a sense of quiet dignity pervades the place.

The floor is covered by an olive green moquette carpet with small palm leaf pattern in a darker shade of same color.

The wainscot is of a blood red *bourds desoir* stuff. Above this, and reaching to the ceiling, which is of a grayish blue, soft and atmospheric, the wall is covered with leather of a true old gold flowing design of scrolls, fruits, flowers, and animals embossed in strong relief against a deep red background.

This material came from Cordova, Portugal, and was used in the 16th century in place of tapestries, being more durable and cheaper. The Venetians and the Dutch also used it in mural decorations.

The portière spoken of above is simple and effective. Its body is composed of warm light brown woolen stuff, and is trimmed with red silk ball fringe. Red, olive, and blue stripes on a gold ground run across the top and base, and peacock feathers add a light and pleasant effect.

An old German halberd with a long spear and axe is used as a rod to hold up the portière.

On the left, and close to the entrance, is a large brass candelabrum, made for a village church in Poland in the fifteenth century. Similar ones can be seen in St. Stephen's Church, in Vienna.

A description of this historic relic will be found interesting. A triangular base in the form of a gallery, supported at the corners by a lion, an eagle, and bull, evangelical symbols, the attributes of Mark, Luke and John, is surmounted by retreating scroll forms which unite to support in turn the central column. This column is built up of a succession of round and urn-shaped pieces of solid brass, the whole pierced and held together by a heavy wrought iron rod. About two feet above the base is a second gallery, round in form. On the floor of this gallery stand four rampant lions, holding in their paws the superstructure which consists of a series of branching arms, made of solid, beautifully wrought brass, fashioned in a scroll design in which are used the conventionalized forms of birds and flowers. The arms terminating in candle holders diminish in length from the bottom up, thus giving a pyramidal shape to the whole. Above the branches which hold the light is placed a nimbus of slightly drooping passion flowers. Above the flowers is a hollow globe, ornamented with an open work scroll design. A double headed eagle holding in each claw a sceptre, forms an appropriate finish.

To the right on the wall is hung a Venetian shield of wood, embossed leather surface. This is rich and delicate in color, and its beauty is enhanced by copper plates in the centre, and along the edge there is a setting of agates and

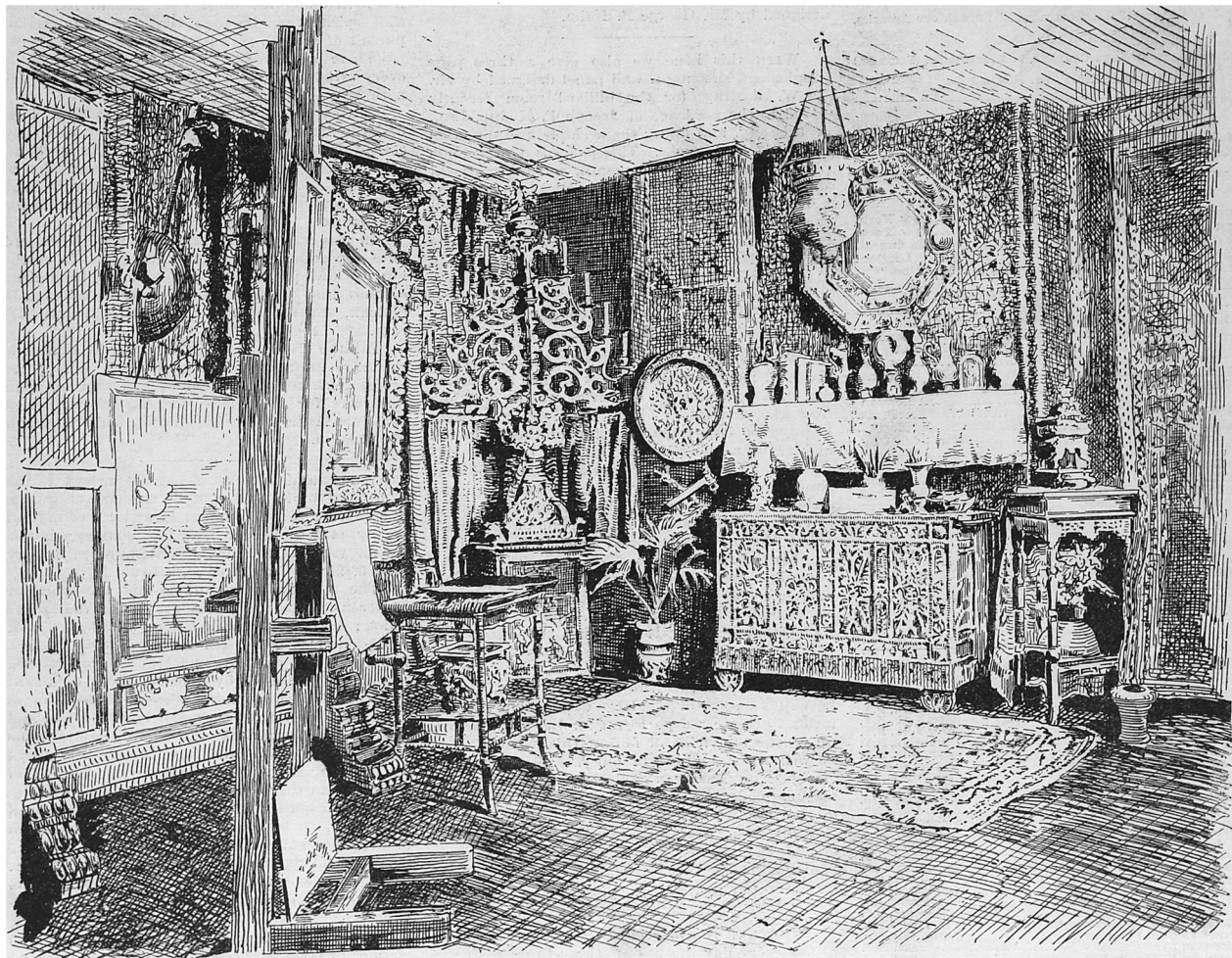


GERMAN, FIFTEENTH CENTURY, WROUGHT AND CHISELED IRON, KEY GUARD. FROM SKETCH BY THOMAS ALLEN, ESQ.

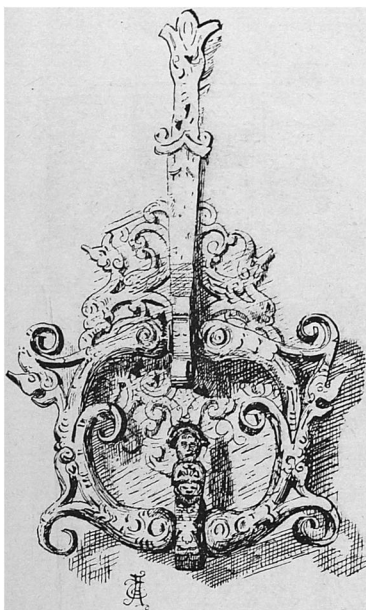
amethysts. This came from the Fould Collection of Paris.

Underneath, placed on the red wainscot, is a rhinoceros hide Indian shield, translucent from having been boiled in oil. Beneath this is a German repoussé platter of silvered brass, originally from Nuremberg. A slight protrusion of a partition holds in its centre a royal French clock of the time of Louis XIV. This is made of richly inlaid tulip wood with sculptured brass ornaments.

Next to the candelabrum is a fine shield, a



INTERIOR OF MR. THOMAS ALLEN'S STUDIO. SKETCHED BY R. GUASTAVINO.



DOOR KNOCKER, GERMAN, FIFTEENTH CENTURY. WROUGHT AND CHISELED IRON. FROM SKETCH BY THOMAS ALLEN, ESQ.

by means of two Algerian portières, quiet in color and design. It is alternated with stripes of blue, red brown, and ivory white, and dotted with embroidered conventionalized daisies, all of the never-fading Oriental dyes.

When Mr. Allen is not painting, these portières are thrown back, revealing two Turkish turban draperies embroidered with gold silk thread in palm leaf patterns.

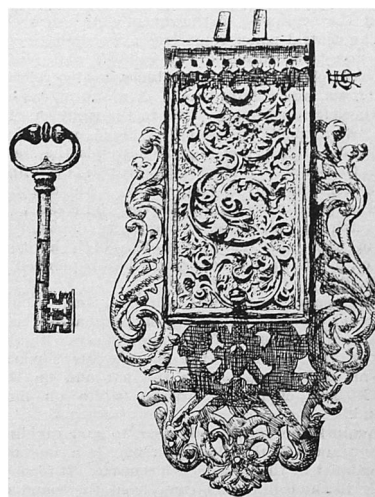
In the corner is placed a palm that serves to break the abruptness of angles, and prepares an easy passage of the eye to a charming effect of color arrangement.

We are now in the north side of the studio, and the light from the only window seen comes flooding into the room, and is softened by means of an Indian scarf which is stretched full width and canopied in an ingenious way by means of Indian barbed and ornamented arrows, which hold the ends and centre in place.

The effect of the light through these rich tints mellows the atmosphere, and as it is directly over a deep seated and richly colored divan, it serves to charm the eye and lends a gentle note to the color symphony.

A Queen Anne mahogany desk, brass mounted, seems almost to have grown at a juncture or wall protrusion, at the end of the divan; and several candelabras jet over the desk, while suspended from overhead a swallow floats in graceful poise.

An easel usually stands next to the desk, and to destroy the vertical lines, a fine piece of household altar embroidery hangs from the center to base.



LOCK AND KEY, FORGED IRON, WITH PLATE OF HAMMERED BRASS, GERMAN, FIFTEENTH CENTURY. FROM SKETCH BY THOMAS ALLEN, ESQ.

reproduction of Cellini's, original now in the Louvre, representing the battle of the Amazons.

Behind the candelabrum, and breaking up its strong lines, is a small shelf on which are placed some exquisite samples of Mexican pottery. A Mexican serape, hand woven, in stripes of many colors, but subdued by long usage, is suspended from the edge of the shelf and reaches to the floor, thus adding a quiet tone to an almost too brilliant corner.

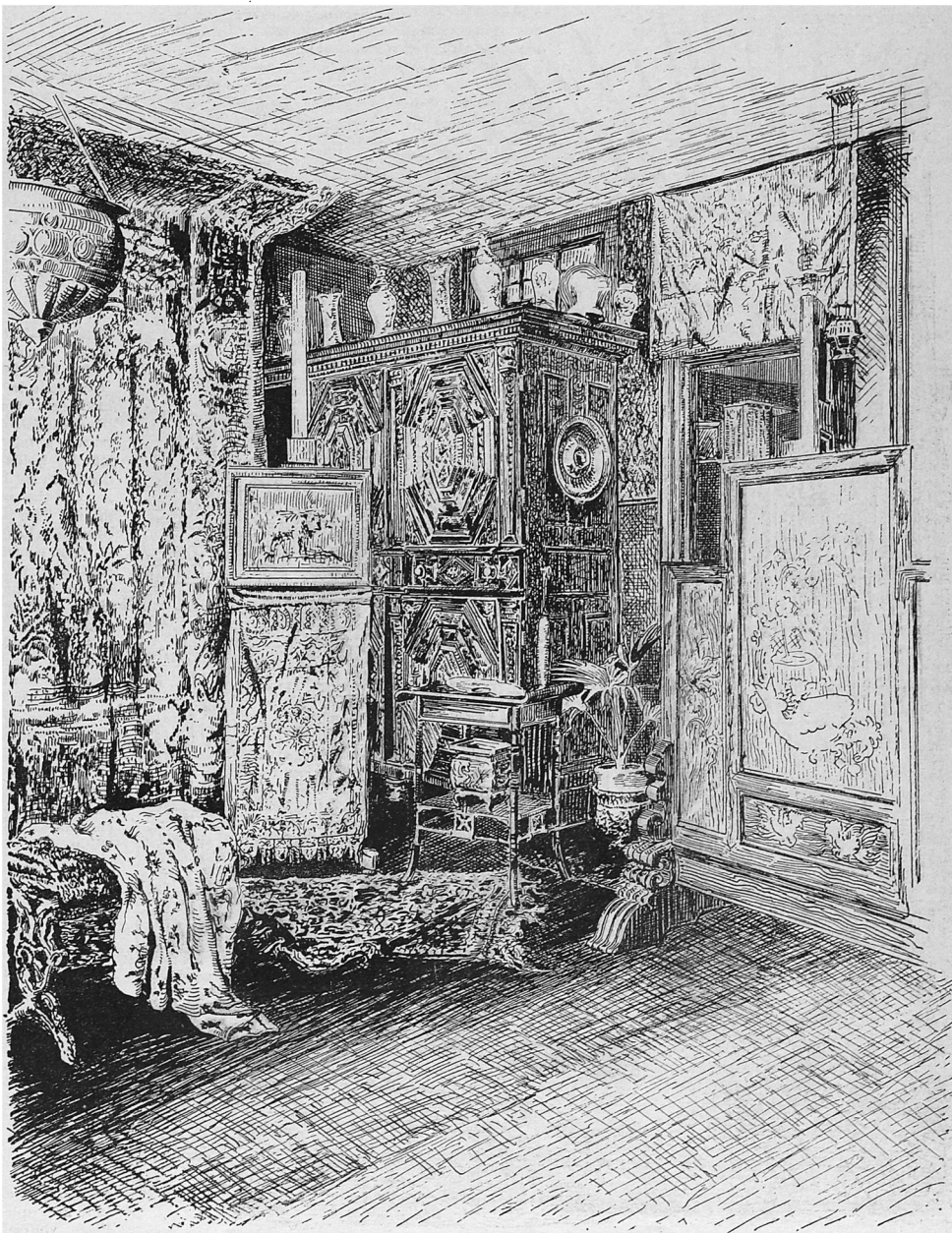
Nearly in the center of the wall and close to the ceiling, is hung a Dutch repoussé sconce of brass. This is highly decorative and in keeping with the surrounding objects.

A shelf beneath serves to hold a number of fine antiquities, such as Persian ewers and water bottles, set with turquoises and carved with chasing in most intricate and beautiful design, a Japanese bronze vase inlaid with silver, old German beer mugs and the like. A strip of fine old Persian silk embroidery hangs from the shelf. Beneath this is an old oak chest of early eighteenth century workmanship, which formerly belonged to a good old dame on the Island of Guernsey. It is well preserved, and a fine example of the paneled and carved work of that period.

Next to this is a high ebony table, its sombre hues being relieved against a white damask, gold embroidered priest's chasuble, old and rich, and set with gems. On the corner is an interesting and historic Persian incense burner in the form of a pomegranate, and is composed of tinned copper. Beside this, and taking up the center of the table, is an exquisitely constructed Indian bronze incense burner. It is mounted on four feet, which are composed of richly-caparisoned elephants' heads. The cover is grided and supports a recumbent elephant. The whole is enriched with jewels, and was once a part of the Balzac Collection.

A Japanese lacquer salver close by is from the same collection, as is also a choice rug on which the table stands. A center shelf on the table always contains a pot of primroses or geraniums, and a more pleasing combination and unity of color could not be imagined.

At this juncture there is a window which is usually darkened



CORNER IN STUDIO OF MR. THOMAS ALLEN. SKETCHED BY R. GUASTAVINO.

A portière of raw silk conceals a window here, and for two feet or more, to the corner, the artist finds his deepest shadows.

The east wall of the studio is almost entirely

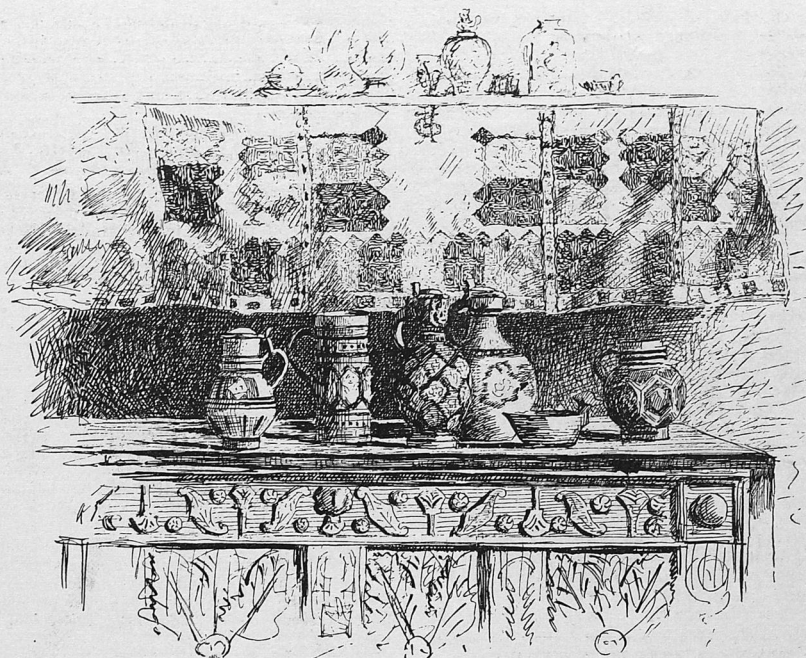
covered by a Flemish tapestry of the last period, (about the beginning of the seventeenth century).

The central panel represents a woodland scene with many beautifully drawn animals and birds, the color scheme is in marine blues, golden yellow, and brown, and subdued reds. A group of camels fills the left foreground, while to the right on the edge of a pool of water, a huge pelican is swallowing a fish, and a goat descends the steep bank to drink. A luxuriant growth of water plants enriches the foreground. An opening between great tree trunks to the right discloses a stretch of distance, wherein is depicted a stream with hilly country and a high horizon, and on a hill up in the perspective, is perched a windmill.

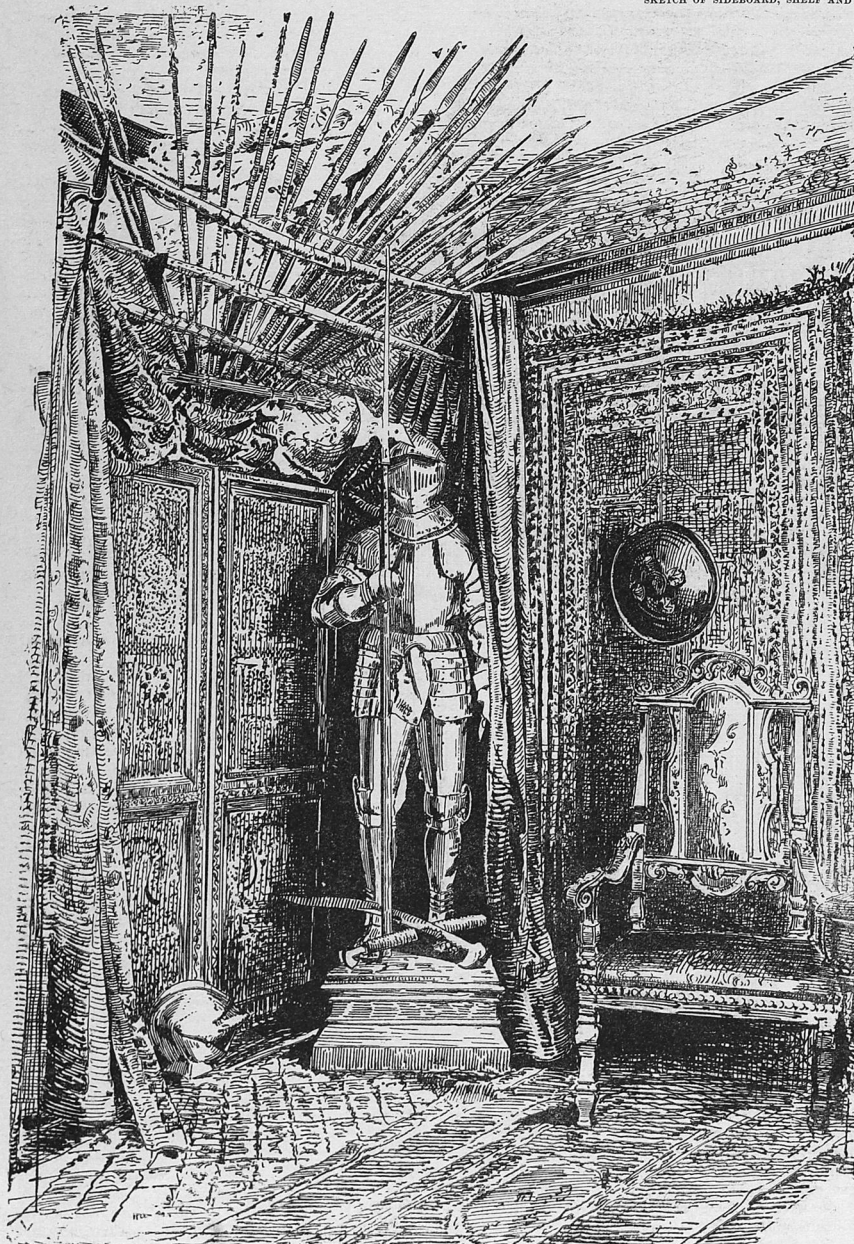
The panel is framed with a very richly decorated border, consisting of Bacchantes, garlands, and festoons of fruits and flowers. In the edge of the border is the manufacturer's mark, and an odd monogram on the left and on the right. The characters are in white on blue ground.

Against the south wall near to and dividing the entrance to the drawing-room, is a fine old oak cabinet of the seventeenth century. It reaches nearly to the ceiling and came from the island of Guernsey. It was originally used as a wardrobe for church vestments, is elaborately paneled and carved in low relief and mounted with brass. Having been stained black it adds dignity and character to the locality, and seems to belong there. On the upper cornice the artist has placed a garniture of old delph ware of blue and white.

On the side of the wardrobe hangs a fine



SKETCH OF SIDEBOARD, SHELF AND MANTEL LAMBREQUIN. BY THOMAS ALLEN, ESQ.



MORISQUE METAL GATE AND ARMOR DECORATION IN STUDIO OF THOMAS ALLEN, ESQ. SKETCHED BY R. GUASTAVINO.

piece of Dutch brass repoussé work. There are two Persian lamps pendent in the right and left center ceilings of the studio. One of these is of open tracery in foliage and flowers, and is very intricate in design.

On it there are little panels of figure decorations, an inscription frieze in Persian, and little pendants hanging around the upper ridge.

This once adorned some old Persian Mosque, and must have given a mellow and dreamy light. The other lamp is much larger and is a rare piece of Persian repoussé work. All of the furniture, it will be noticed, is low in tone, and yet the draperies give the room, at all times, a cheerful aspect.

There are two or three pieces of rare cabinet work that are worth describing. An official Japanese rosewood screen placed between the two rooms is elaborately decorated and of great value. It is made in four panels and both notes are rich in design. On one side a gorgeously dressed black bearded falconer is seated; on his right hand is poised a falcon just ready for flight, and on his left he holds a white dove with the impress of death on its half closed eyes.

On the small panel to the left is a quail in flight. The panel to the right contains two quails pluming themselves on the ground.

The central lower panel contains the Daimio's coat of arms. The reverse is decorated with a group of carp, sea shells, a basket filled with clams and a charmingly drawn spray of pink azalias. The smaller side panels contain beautifully designed sprays of flowers and plants. The material used is composed of ivory, mother-of-pearl, coral and bone.

Close by this screen is a Japanese temple bell of bronze placed on a red lacquered stand. Another object of interest and adding to the charms that greet the eye at every turn is a double-shelfed ebony table. The top represents a sort of scroll edge, with an Etruscan lizard near one corner. A twisted gilt grass basket and containing delicate heather adorns the table, while on the lower shelf is a Japanese crystal resting on a bamboo tripod, which in some old Shinto temple, once reminded the pagan worshiper that his soul must be just as pure in order to obtain eternal rest. The crystal reflects every object in the room and gives the key note to the whole.

The entrance to the drawing-room is of a receptive nature, and consists of a piece of blue satin embroidery which is suspended from a spear.

The sides are draped with Albanian lace caught up in graceful folds. There is a passage way of about six feet to the drawing-room, and a note of color prepares you for the change in the tones of the two rooms. It consists of an altar cloth of pink silk damask, and is suspended by a javelin.

"What a room to paint a portrait in!" Backgrounds of any kind imaginable, sympathetic in tone and quality of light that charms the senses. Place yourself in a carved seventeenth century

Dutch chair on a Venetian leather seat that is fastened with huge brass-headed nails, and look about you.

You will quickly discover that the room is pitched in a low key because the daylight is readily diffused from the windows. The walls are profusely hung with relics of war, antiquities, and rich stuffs.

There are no abrupt curves, an easy breaking up of square architectural lines having been accomplished by the most artistic draping imaginable.

In one recess is a canopy of gold and silver brocade and light colors, held up by assegais or javelins from Zululand, spread out in the form of a fan and resting on several Indian lacquered bows, ornamented in most intricately painted patterns and formerly a part of Jules Jacquemart's collection.

Strangely contrasting, and hanging from one of the bows is an old Roman lamp relieved against a bit of green damask.

A pair of sliding brass doors of open chiseled work, once the inner doors of a tomb, and most exquisitely traced, forms the background.

Beside the door, as if on guard, stands a perfect suit of sixteenth century German steel plate armor. An antique Persian prayer rug of olive, dark blue, tawny yellow and creamy white tones hangs on the wall beside the armor, and no paper or painting could give such effect as this produces.

One of Daubigny's "landscapes" forms a center around which is arranged a flight of Indian ornamented arrows, balanced by two brass sconces.

Circassian arms are placed in juxtaposition, and some fine cloisonné ware tempers the otherwise too bristling wall. A brocade silk altar cloth is used here with telling effect, the forms and folds making a gentle and important arrangement.

The windows are hung with blood red brocade tapestry, gold ornaments, and the glass is painted with the Allen coat of arms, which mellows the light.

One of Corot's paintings on one of the sides hangs against a richly embroidered low toned Chinese red hanging.

Four walnut panels, of the French renaissance period, representing the story of Phæton, carved in high relief, are placed in various positions.

An angle is made in one corner of old gold tapestry with a rich border, a figure painting by Boughton forming a center.

The ceiling is a pale blue ground with gold circles, which is light and cheerful, and takes away any feeling of oppression of the low studding.

The floor is covered with Bokhara, Persian, Cashmere, and other choice rugs. Cabinets, library shelves, and the like, fill in at just the right niches, and you never feel that the thing is overdone.

A fine old oak table is filled with carved Japanese objects and bric-a-brac, and its griffin legs show to advantage.

Luxury and taste are evident at every turn, and it is hard to properly convey the degree of refined artistic feeling which pervades these rooms.

I would like to have given an outline of some of Mr. Allen's paintings, and enumerate the many hundreds of sketches and studies I saw tucked away in quiet drawers and corners, but as this article deals entirely with the decorative, that pleasure is denied.

THE ART OF ARRANGEMENT OF ARTISTIC OBJECTS.

THE great diversity of taste that exists among the public leads to great differences in the arrangement of artistic objects. The subject appears never to have been honored with a treatise, yet it closely concerns the principles of color, contrast of forms, and due disposition of space. We

would accordingly call attention to the different effects produced both by a right and inartistic posing of *articles de luxe*, whether in paintings, statuary, castings, and carvings; in short, to the innumerable articles which are employed to embellish apartments.

What is desired is to show them off to the best advantage. One article will sensibly or insensibly affect the appearance of another. The effect of the display of such articles in many private dwellings is injured by overcrowding. Whatever their value and separate attractiveness, it is

more so that these differ in size and character. If a few are of large size they are readily disposed of, occupying, as they should, the most prominent places; the difficulty is with those of smaller size. A certain irregularity as to height will be found to be pleasing as contributing to variety, and presenting them at the heights and distances at which they may be seen to best advantage. Much here depends on the interior architecture of the room, and something on the ground against which they are laid.

For ornaments strictly so-called, mantel-pieces and brackets afford the best opportunity for display, whether the mantel-piece have a simple shelf or is built up towards the ceiling with pilastered recesses. With the former most of the objects in the article selected should occupy the center and those to right and left be of less height than the ornaments at the extremity. The other class of mantel-pieces is well set off by antique or medieval objects, as in vases of porcelain and metallic ewers and plaques, the hues of which afford that sprightliness of appearance appropriate to the hearth; but in these choiceness in the articles is more important than their number. The charm should be in suggestiveness, and not be injured by a crowd of objects that would present a museum-like appearance. Nor need the ornaments in the recessed sides be equally balanced, or contain the same description of objects.

In the construction of houses, where there is ample space at the command of the architect, recesses to contain articles of furniture that would otherwise project inconveniently, are to be recommended. The contrast of elaborated and plain surfaces of ornaments is never to be lost sight of.

The introduction of small mirrors of beveled glass in rich oval or hexagonal frames, set in iridescent glass with leaves and flowers, has been of benefit to the display of minor ornaments; when with concave surfaces they reflect all portions of the room; at all events, unlike the old looking glasses, they do not monopolize space.

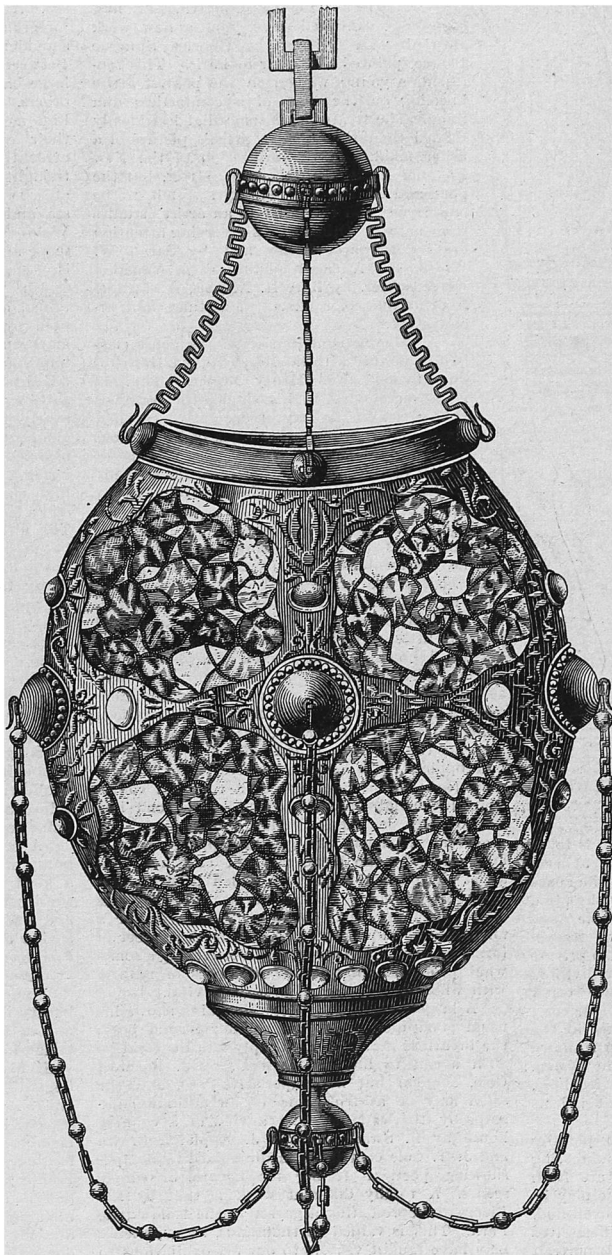
The effect of artistic arrangement as contrasted with unskilled medleys of objects may be seen on an extensive scale in the store windows of this metropolis. The great secret of success is to excite attention, and there are hundreds of window dressers who have a positive genius in this line. Much may be learnt by those desirous of setting off their interiors to the best effect by the survey of the arrangements carried out in show windows.

A LOST ART IN CERAMICS.

UNDER an ancient Chinese dynasty, the beautiful translucency of the exquisitely thin ware produced was taken advantage of for a peculiar species of decoration, the art of which has been lost. On the pure vessel being filled with liquid, blue fishes and other animals became visible, which were absolutely imperceptible when it was empty. This effect was produced by enclosing the colored figures between two thin lamina of porcelain paste, and reducing the thickness of the outer side as much as possible before the glaze was applied.

HAMMOCKS may be made of heavy canvas and trimmed with bright fringe.

THE LONDON TIMES in a recent article upon the beauties of a nobleman's home in the interior of Russia, described the condition of the inhabitants of a town of 1,000 persons, in the midst of which this nobleman's estate was located. The houses are of wood, thatched, and of two rooms each. Among the entire number there were only twenty beds and bedsteads, though no one person possessed both bed and bedstead. What comfort could be gathered from the bedstead alone is not stated.



HANGING HALL LAMP.

DESIGNED BY MISS ALICE MORRISON, STUDENT OF THE WOMAN'S INSTITUTE OF TECHNICAL DESIGN.

One-third actual size. Chains and frame work of brass, studded with jewels; windows of broken jewels. Openings are cut in the brass for ventilation. The lower part of the lamp opens by means of a hinge set in brass band, exposing four keys inside. The bent rods connecting the lamp with the ball above it, are hollow, to allow the gas to run down inside the brass bands bounding the sides in tubes, terminating in four burners, which are regulated by the four keys. The top is left open, that the flame may burn without flickering or smoking.

This Lamp was awarded THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER Medal for the best example of decorative work.

better at all times to have too few than too many. This result often arises from the impression that all portable artistic objects of value, suitable for display in connection with furniture, should be brought together in rooms to which general visitors have access. The fair course seems to us to give the family and sitting-room some of the benefit of what is beautiful in art, and so calculated to excite pleasurable emotions.

To determine the best positions of paintings and engravings is often a difficult matter, the